# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# COMMUNICATIONS
# LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:18
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2016
Investment in telecom Infrastructure
Dhruvanarayana Shri Rangaswamy;Patil Shri Bheemrao Baswanthrao

**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has formulated a scheme to invest or seek investment of significant amount in order to improve telecom infrastructure in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the names of the States which are lagging in telecom infrastructure due to paucity of funds;

(c) the total amount allocated for expansion of telecom infrastructure in these States, State-wise; and

(d) the details of measures/plans to modernize telecom infrastructure in the country?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 18 FOR 16th NOVEMBER, 2016 REGARDING "INVESTMENT IN TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE".

(a) & (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has not formulated any scheme to invest or seek investment of significant amount in order to improve telecom infrastructure across the country. However, TRAI has recommended various schemes to improve telecom infrastructure across the country.

(c) & (d) State-wise details of funds disbursed for various schemes implemented by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for expansion of the telecom services across the country are at Annexure-I. Action taken by the Government for expansion of telecom infrastructure is as below:

(i) On 10.09.2014, the Government approved a proposal to implement a Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the North-Eastern Region (NER). The Project envisages providing mobile coverage to 8621 identified uncovered villages by installation of about 6673 mobile towers, installation of 321 mobile tower sites along National Highways and strengthening of transmission network in the NER. The estimated cost of implementation is Rs. 5336.18 crore. The Project would be funded from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).
(ii) 2199 mobile towers are being set up in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected States with a total estimated cost of Rs.3567.58 crore. 2185 mobile towers are radiating as on 31.10.2016.
(iii) Telecom Commission has given 'in principle' approval on 07.11.2014 for Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan including provision of mobile connectivity for Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands with a total estimated investment of Rs. 221.05 crore.
(iv) It is estimated that there are about 55,000 villages in the country that do not have mobile coverage. Mobile coverage to these uncovered villages is likely to be provided in a phased manner, subject to availability of financial resources. Government has prioritized to provide mobile communication services in uncovered villages in LWE affected areas, North-Eastern States, Islands, and Himalayan States in the first phase, with financial support from USO Fund.
(v) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project, renamed as BharatNet, is planned to establish a network infrastructure by connecting all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country by using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media, for providing broadband connectivity by all categories of service providers on non-discriminatory basis.

The project is planned to be implemented in three phases. Under first phase of the project, 1 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) are to be connected by laying underground OFC by March 2017. Under second phase, connectivity will be provided to remaining 1.5 lakh GPs in the country using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media, by September, 2018. Futuristic network with ring topology to be used between districts and blocks and blocks and GPs, targeted to be completed by 2023.

As on 06.11.2016, Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) has been laid to 62,463 Gram Panchayats (GPs) with a total length of 1,43,445 km. Out of these, 12,597 GPs have been provided with broadband connectivity.

Annexure-I

State wise allocation / disbursement of fund under the schemes of USOF

| State/CCA | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Andaman & Nicobar | 8.11 | 0.00 | 8.11 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 1.33 | 0.38 | 1.71 |
| Assam | 0.55 | 0.37 | 0.92 |
| Bihar | 2.58 | 0.65 | 3.23 |
| Chhattisgarh | 0.37 | 0.00 | 0.37 |
| Department of Telecommunications Head Quarters | 3032.15 | 3529.95 | 6562.1 |
| Gujarat | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0 |
| Haryana | 1.82 | 1.47 | 3.29 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 0.30 | 0.12 | 0.42 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 0.52 | 0.41 | 0.93 |
| Jharkhand | 0.16 | 0.57 | 0.73 |
| Karnataka | 4.17 | 0.00 | 4.17 |
| Kerala | 1.32 | 3.00 | 4.32 |
| Maharashtra | 14.10 | 0.00 | 14.1 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 12.58 | 1.05 | 13.63 |
| North East-I | 6.74 | 14.89 | 21.63 |
| North East-II | 2.04 | 13.93 | 15.97 |
| Odisha | 1.58 | 2.26 | 3.84 |
| Punjab | 6.56 | 0.95 | 7.51 |
| Rajasthan | 0.00 | 0.38 | 0.38 |
| Tamil Nadu | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.01 |
| Uttar Pradesh (East) | 0.77 | 0.37 | 1.14 |
| Uttar Pradesh (West) | 0.29 | 0.08 | 0.37 |
| Uttarakhand | 0.19 | 0.00 | 0.19 |
| West Bengal | 1.76 | 0.61 | 2.37 |
| Total | 3100.00 | | |
| | 3571.44 | | |
| | 6671.44 | | |

* North East-I includes: Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram
** North East-II includes: Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland